1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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enrich the soil. Now before a field is chosen for cutting, it must be surveyed carefully to see that there are no snakes to be injured; that no trees which have strong spirits like the silk-cotton tree, or the parasitic akatasi, will be destroyed; that no ant hill whether on the ground or on a tree be disturbed. But Kasanya's wife's mother's brother was careless, or unlucky. A small ant hill had escaped his notice.

"The *Akantamasu* god is powerful. It is a bad god," Kasanya said over and over, making of it a refrain to his story.

When the ant hill was destroyed, its spirit fixed itself upon the family. Kasanya's wife's mother became ill, and although the contents of one obia pot after another were used up in bathing her with sangrafu and the serabaki and chembe leaves, she did not get better. Her husband, an able obia man, made special charms for her to wear about her neck, and sprinkled her with medicine with the feather of the sacred opete, the vulture, but still her illness kept on. At last they went to a diviner. To the village of Dahomey they went, the village where the most powerful obia was lodged, and there she learned that the Akantamasu god had come to the family. The diviner told her how to serve the god so that she might have respite—the days that were sacred to him, the dances she must dance on these days, the sacrifices to make. They knew that it would never be a friendly god to them, for it had come as a kunu. There was more trouble and more. The family gave many offerings, and the possessed woman danced whenever the spirit seized her, but soon she died, and the others have been dying since.

"What happened to the man who destroyed the ant hill? Did he get the Akantamasu gadu?"

"No, not he himself. His mother, and his sister, and his sister's children."

"But why?"

The answer was that kunu worked that way, and he went on to tell us about his sons. The first son had gone to the

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itself, an open shelter under a thatched roof resting on four posts. Inside it, upon the ground, lay a flat stone whitened with sacred clay, and on this a bottle stood. Directly behind the stone was the altar, a low table on which lay several egg-shaped pieces of the sacred pemba—the white clay—and some egg-shaped stones which had come from the bed of the river. A circle of iron, perhaps two fingers' breadth in thickness and having a diameter of ten or twelve inches, rested on the ground under the altar. A stick had been planted to face the thicket of wild pineapple that made a wall at the back, and from it hung a strip of white cotton for the ancestors. To the left of this was a simply carved stool, the tracery of its design become all but indistinguishable under the coat of white clay which covered it. Several bottles lay at the foot of this stool.

"Ya-hai, mati, you are praying to the Mother of the River. It is well," said Kasanya, as he came up to us with his pole-man and the men from Gankwe and interrupted our scrutiny of the shrine.

Followed by Sedefo and Asikanu, he entered the shrine, while the others stood with us outside the railing which connected at sides and back the posts upon which the roof rested. Kasanya called on the Sky God first. "*G'an gadu*," he began, "Mother of the River, Ancestors, grant that we travel safely. Grant that we bring the white man safely to the country of the Granman. Grant that the white man pay us well. I thank you."

As he finished, the listening men clapped their hands in unison, and spoke in chorus, "Great thanks!" Some distance away, down the slope which dropped to the river, was Bibifo, who wanted to be called Adrian. He did not come too near the shrine, but there he was, halfway up, with head bent, his lips moving as he muttered a prayer of his own.

Now Sedefo came forward, and Kasanya left the shrine and disappeared behind the pineapple bushes. When he came back he held leaves in his hand, which he said were sacred. He would crush them and put them in water dipped

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here at the Mamadam, and later he would bathe with this that he might be purified. Meanwhile Sedefo and Asikanu, each in his turn, addressed the Mother of the River, each speaking his errand and asking that his journey be prospered.

Bayo came up alone when the loading was quite finished. He sat down on a crosspiece of the shrine to one side of the flat rock, poured some of the contents of the bottle on the stone, and, taking up one of the egg-shaped pieces of pemba, he rubbed it between his fingers and touched the moist stone with his whitened hands. Now with his fingers he streaked his upper arm, just below the shoulders and over the muscles which played to the swinging of the pole-stick, and then his chest and knees.

"Mother of the River, give us a safe journey. Carry the white man and his woman without sickness. I thank you."

Later, when we were about to make off, he turned to us with his ready laugh. "You will walk well, Ba'ka. I have a strong spirit. I said things to the Mother of the River under my breath which you did not hear. The Mother of the River will look after you."

"What is this log, Bayo, right here on top of the falls? Why has no one claimed it?" we asked, pointing to the log of purple-heart close by, which we had noticed lying across the Mamadam.

"When it was sent down, something happened to turn it sidewise, and it was caught so. No one will touch it. It must be that the gods wanted it for themselves."

4

There are many shrines on the river. At the G'an Creek a man would speak his prayer from a distance, call the creek "ancestor," state his errand, and continue his journey. Far up the stream, where the juncture of the Pikien Rio and the Grand Rio forms the river which the Bush Negroes call the Saramacca, is the Tapa Wata shrine. There, our men said, we would do well to avoid looking, though our boat rested across the river more than a quarter of a mile

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bush for some months, and when he came back he did not feel well, and they quarreled often. When they quarreled she refused to cook for him, and so he said bad things to her. He began to say the child was not his. Now when a father takes away his 'kra, his soul, from the child while it is in the mother's womb, it is not good. When the child was born, it was a very small child. Afterwards the man left the woman. He still said the child was not his, but he used to bring money to the woman sometimes to buy things for the child. The neighbors said she must not take the money. If she took it, they said, the child would die of fio-fio. But the woman took the money. Nowadays many of them don't believe in the old things, until they find out. When the child was four months old it died. Everybody knew it was fio-fio."

He told other incidents of what happened to people who had fio-fio.

"I tell you all this because sometimes the men in the boats talk about the whites, and they think you don't understand. But you know what they say, and you are angry. If you give them a present of leaf tobacco later, or rum, then they or you may become sick. . . . The men in the bush know what to do about fio-fio, Massa, and you must learn, too. The proverb says: 'How is a boat to go, if it has no paddles?'"

3

At the entrance to the village of S'ei a gigantic silk-cotton tree stood. Its trunk was massive, and the roots which projected outwards like so many buttresses made of it a great somber cathedral. The curiously twisted grooves which these buttresses made were said to house many spirits, and particularly the three who lived in the kankan tree, as the natives called it. Gedeonsu, the male god, and Tinné, his wife, lived there with their child Dyombie, the most dreaded of them all. The kankan tree gods were thought of as women's gods, though a few men might be found, here and there, who would, on occasion,

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be possessed by them. Between the roots of the tree offerings were placed—two or three bottles on their sides, or a calabash filled with sacred clay.

When the time came to dance to the gods of the kankan tree, a tunic of cotton was placed about its trunk. While the drums spoke to the gods, white clay was spread over the bark, a chicken was killed, and its blood allowed to spray the tree and drip into a calabash placed on the ground to receive it. Eggs inside obia pots were put beside the tree, and bottles filled with sweet liquor and the juice of sugar cane. All about its wide trunk the dancers swayed and leaped, each dancing to her own spirit until, at the height of their ecstasy, there were a few among them who would climb the great tree itself, and dance on its branches. The drums continued until the frenzy ebbed. Had they stopped sooner, those in the tree could not have remained there safely or in safety have descended to the ground.

At other times, women came to Gedeonsu to ask him for children, and those who were troubled by his spirit brought offerings, though the great dances were held when the old year came to an end, and the big offerings were then made.

"If a man were to cut down a kankan tree, Gedeonsu would cut off his foot. I myself saw it happen," said a man to us at S'ei. "And his sister got the god."

The kankan tree gods could be bought, too. A woman who wanted fertility would seek to buy Gedeonsu. Others might wish to have Tinné. Only an individual who had a spirit which gave him the right to make obias and call the gods could get the spirit for one who wished to buy it. Such a man would take an obia pot, fill it with water and place inside it cowrie shells which had not been cleansed. After speaking his invocation, he would add a sacred white stone, called an obia stone, and with a calabash in one hand and a bell in the other, he would go to the tree and address the spirits as he rang the bell. When the water became ruffled, it was a sign that the god had entered it. Quickly he would cover the calabash with a cloth and take it away with him.

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This ritual might have brought Gedeonsu, or Tinné—whoever was called. The two could not, however, be taken at the same time, for one of them had to be left to care for the child Dyombie. If two of the kankan tree gods were wanted, then mother and child, or father and child, would be sought.

"The kankan tree spirits are not bad, but people fear them. They are not as bad as the Akatasi gods."

The Akatasi gods were those which animated the kato liana, and were related to the gods of the ant hill. This kato bush was a terrible parasite which, getting its strangle hold on a tree, would rise higher than the tree itself and at last kill it.

The silk-cotton, however, was a friendly tree and cruel only when its spirits were tampered with by those who did not know how to control the gods. When the ancestors came into this river, which "in early days was only a creek," it was they who had sought out these trees, and had made their villages where they stood. Now the trees had become great, and the villages were great.

Here was the silk-cotton tree at S'ei, one of the greatest of all. Its roots made ridges in the path to the village. Under the spiritual guard they spread, and to the large oval of wood fixed on a wooden base which stood a short distance from it, and to the low shelter where, on the head of a crudely carved image, rested a whitened covered pot, and farther to the mound of earth on which stood offerings. Farther still the roots followed the path, and into the village itself, until, perhaps half a mile from the tree, they reached the Kromanti house and the village council house and the home of the chief. It was as though these roots were the arteries which fed strength to the Kromanti spirits dwelling there, and as if they brought the wisdom of the ancestors to the shelter where the men of the village gathered to hear and try cases, to discuss the will of men and gods as they touched upon the well-being of the people.

Upon our arrival we were bidden to the council house, where men and women were waiting about. This was an

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834 848 "Don't go off into the bush with a man. A child born to you will have a bad bush god, if you do," she added as an afterthought.

5

123 197 In the other corner, Chief And'u, the bassia, and about half a dozen men were talking of the great book about their ancestors which the white man had.

"It is large so," said the chief to one of the older men, indicating an imaginary size which multiplied the size of the actual volume at least tenfold. "And people say it has in it pictures of the Apuku gods, small as we ourselves know them, and a picture of the evil Apuku who appear as fire in the distance. . . . Mati, white men have gone into the Kromanti houses in the country of our ancestors and have made pictures!"

"It is impossible!"

"I want to see!"

The old man said, "I will not look. Books are not for us, mati."

"But mati, the G'aman has heard, and he wants to see."

The old man shook his head. He would have nothing of pictures that figured what should never have been allowed to be photographed.

It seemed prudent to give the conversation a new turn. 137 Down river, the men had said that a man of this village had lately found a new *neku* liana. Was it so?

"The man who found it was my son," said the old man, "you should have come for the dance. You would have seen [822] how we do things here in the bush. But pictures you could not take. No, mati, if you photograph, you take the soul."

824 The festivities for the find had been especially joyful, he explained, for the boy had only recently come by his gods, and this had been yet another proof that he would serve his family capably. For though the find was his own, all [218] his relatives in the mother's line would enjoy its use. Here- [226] after, when the poison of its leaves and its slender branches

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was wanted for killing fish in a creek, they would have their own neku.

When a man found a neku vine, he first had to cut some of it, and bring it home with him. Then he sent word to all the men of his village to come and carry the branches of the neku to the place of ceremony. He named the place and day for the pounding of the neku. The invitation was given in the name of the old men of the village, and the headman sent his bassias, those men who assist him in village affairs, with messages to neighboring settlements. When this had been done, the finder of the vine appointed five or six men of his own choice, and these were called "Bassias of Neku." It was they who had charge of the ceremonies. The night preceding the dance these men went about crying, "Tomorrow we will have neku. All must come." Again the men went to the bush where the neku vine had been found, and brought to the village some more of the vine for pounding.

Early the following morning a horn was sounded, and the men from the neighboring villages who had come for the festivities also went and cut some of the neku, and brought it to the pounding place. When the men were gathered, each took up a stick and pounded the neku. And what they crushed they put into corials filled with water. These corials were then sunk in the stream. In a short time the poisoned fish floated to the surface of the water, and all the men took up their long-handled scoops and began to fish. The bassias of neku, whom the finder of the plant had appointed for the ceremony, directed the fishing. When a quantity of fish had been caught, those who were not of the village where the owner of the vine lived gave of their catch to the finder of the neku plant, and some went to the chief of the village, and the elders, too, had a share of what the outsiders had caught, though in some villages only the owner of the vine profited by the gifts of the others. Then the men joined the women, who were dressed in their finest cloths, and the dancing began.

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824 796 Later, through the gathering darkness, the people of the neighboring villages went home, paddling their boats which were loaded down with the fish that had been netted. And from this time on, everyone knew that this neku vine was [423] [428] the property of him who had found it, and of his family, down through his mother's line, forever.

"Ai, mati, you would have seen something, if you had got here for the neku dance!"

6

361 Like any other Bush Negro village, S'ei was a series of sandy clearings about which were grouped huts of woven palm fronds and palm thatch. All about was the big bush. [487] [789] The trails which led from the village were each guarded by a magically treated palm azang, and shrines to the ancestral spirits who saw to it that evil was kept away. Where the several paths led, a stranger was not encouraged to discover. Down one, women were to be seen disappearing [489] in the morning with trays on their heads, their infants astride their backs, held inside the folds of a cloth which was fastened high above their breasts, and caught up again below them. In many upper river villages, this path led to the fields, some distance away. Others were the way to [778] shrines, erected to those spirits which must be worshiped outside the village. Another path might lead to a brook, which the villagers held sacred. There were trails, too, which connected neighboring villages, and led perhaps farther yet, but for the stranger, the highway was the river, [486] and no matter how short the distance between one settlement and another, he was not invited to make his way through the bush.

"You do not want to go through the bush, white man. In the bush are evil spirits," we heard many times.

A village clearing was divided into quarters. Each quarter was inhabited by one of the *mãs*, or extended families, and 361 592 the quarter bore its name. It was composed of several households—five or six or more, depending upon the size of the

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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over all things. Among his other names are *Gran Tata* (Great Father) and *Old Nengre*. Subordinate to the chief deity is Apuku, spirit of the jungle. There is also the spirit of the river, *Tonai*, or *Amucu*, or *Watra Mama*. Then comes the snake spirit, whose ritual was once a thing of horror, *Papa Gadu*, whose other name is *Voodoo*.

The evil spirit, the bad, wild spirit of the bush, is *Cromanti*, who possesses the dancers in their midnight fury. His dwelling-place is the silk-cotton tree. In the jungles of both West Africa and South America the silk-cotton trees (*Ceiba pentandra* or *Bombax ceiba*) grow to an immense size, towering above all the other vegetation. The Bush Negroes [824] consider this *con con dree* sacred, refusing to touch it with a knife or axe. Any man who cuts one down is accursed. Once, during the construction of a village, a man was forced to cut one down. Cromanti went into his wife and killed her in six weeks. Similar to the silk-cotton is the *kotu con con dree*, and any man so foolhardy as to molest it will get into dangerous trouble.

The kindly spirit is *Aflamu*, who protects the Djukas against the invisible men who live in the jungle. The fetishes to Aflamu have two eyes, one looking forward and the other placed backward, to indicate his unceasing vigilance in all directions. In *The Golden Bough*, Frazer mentions the Djukas as setting up a Janus-faced image on the village paths. We have never seen one of these and doubt their existence. The fetish to Aflamu is placed on the village path, however, and the same idea is involved in the eye set in the back.

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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drums carry farther toward heaven than the talkee-talkee of a lone supplicant.

It is not easy to distinguish between the primitive's magic and his medicine. In the village organization a distinction is sometimes made between the *medicine man*, who is concerned with remedies for sickness, and the *obeiah priest*, whose business is charms and rituals. There are two or three obeiah priests to each village. Their profession is the propitiation of spirits, that is, magic and religion. The magic of the obeiah men is largely secret. Once we arrived at a village while a ritual of some nature was going on. Pots were stewing in the centre of the clearing, while obeiah men were moving around them. One held a rattle, which he shook monotonously. The bahkra was asked to leave. It was magic in the making.

The Bush Negroes possess an extensive system of primitive medicine. Various roots, herbs, and nuts are gathered in the jungle, and their use is mingled with various superstitions. The witch doctor or medicine man who prepares infusions from these herbs holds no exalted position in the esteem of the villagers; he is simply following a particular profession to which no special prestige is attached. He may, however, be an obeiah priest in addition to being a medicine man.

He prepares several kinds of medicine, among them the *snakee-kutti*, or snake-bite cure. It cures the bites of all reptiles and makes the person immune from future attack. Snakee-kutti is made in this way: a venomous snake is killed and the head and the tail-end are cut from the body; the tail

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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The decoration of objects with cowrie shells comes by way of Africa. The monkey dance said to be practised by the Djukas is described as similar to the gorilla dance of the West Coast. The coiled wire bracelets and anklets are of African design, and the general mode of dress is the same.

The Djuka attitude toward the silk-cotton tree is common among the tribes of the Guinea Coast. "Throughout West Africa from Senegal to the Niger the silk-cotton tree is regarded with reverence and believed to be the abode of a god or spirit. This general consensus of opinion is no doubt due to the stupendous size attained by some of these trees, which tower far above all others of the forest."

*Adji-boto*, a game in which seeds are placed in round holes in a board, is played not only by the Bush Negroes but also by the Town Negroes of Paramaribo; it is found along the Gold Coast, Benin, Sierra Leone, West Sudan, and, in modified forms, in many other parts of Africa. The fish spear of the Djukas is found in Liberia, Mandingo, and the Gold Coast. Shooting fish with a bow and arrow is an African custom, but it is also widespread among the aboriginal Indians of South America. On the other hand, according to Dr. W. Roth of Demerara, a number of traps and hunting devices now used by the Guiana Indians are of African origin and have been borrowed from the Negroes.

The Djuka fire fan, woven of split rattan, is borrowed from the Arawak Indians, but different types of the same device can be found also among the Tshi- and Ewe-speaking people and in Liberia, Cameroons, etc. The Bush Negro

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As one woman said: "He gave me this piece when we were first married. I won't part with it now." Usually an elaborate parley is necessary. The women are undecided whether to sell or not. They laugh, giggle, put their finger coyly in their mouths, joke bashfully with bystanders, and cannot make up their minds as to the price. They never know how much to ask for a piece. Sometimes they will mention a preposterous figure, hoping like a naïve child that the strange bahkra will pay that much. But on such occasions a rebuke will make them more reasonable. Once an arrogant witch doctor intervened in a transaction with a Bush Negro woman, demanding angrily that she receive an exorbitant payment. His anger was squelched with a few sharp words, and, contrite, he sat up all night to carve an ornate implement to present to the bahkra as a peace-offering. Cunning Adjobo, the medicine man!

The Bush Negro implements are carved out of jungle wood. Some are made of lignum vitæ, the hardest wood known. A few of them are made of soft wood, light and spongy, but these are not popular. The small paddles are used for stirring in the cooking pots, and the combs are actually used for the hair. They are never worn as personal ornaments, and when not in use are hung up on the walls of the hut. The utensils are all made with common trade jackknives and compasses which are used as dividers. It is principally with these dividers that the serpentine motifs are executed. After the carving is finished the piece is smoothed off by rubbing it with matted grass and river

682 /8 cont./
[672] culprit is condemned to find the requital in his offspring. His
[567] children, children's children, and great-grandchildren must render slave services for the family of the person poisoned.

692 Moreover, they usually act in accordance with the judgment and the decision of their elders or council members. Most punish-
681 ments consist of whip lashes.

## Chapter IV

## Weapons

411 These consist of rifles, machetes, bow and arrow, and lances.
278 In some cases they also use a kind of cudgel (1). The most dangerous
682

1. An Indian weapon called apoetoe.

one that they possess, however, is an assortment of vegetable poisons with which they can secretly strike their enemies and whose effects manifest themselves slowly, but are usually lethal. They not only mix these with one food or another, or in snuff or tobacco, but in the case of some can merely bring them in contact with a part of the body and thereby produce to the most infectious results.

/9/

## Chapter V

## Dwellings, Practices, Customs, Housekeeping

342 Their huts are constructed low above the ground from un-
824 worked round wood, covered with pina, the leaves of a palm species (1), and surrounded by palisade pales.

1. Euterpe oleracea Mart.

352 The couches and sleeping places within are also made of paling.

354 Inside the hut is found the hearth or place for the fire, on
372 which they cook and in which they constantly maintain a fire for

354 /9 cont./
[372] they do not like to be without it; at least they do not like to
[353] sleep without a fire. Their weapons hang above their sleeping
[513] place, which is a hammock, in which man and wife sometimes lie together. Rarely do more than one man and one woman with their
342 small children live in a single hut.

296 Their articles of clothing, as well as other small belongings,
251 are kept in pagalen, a kind of plaited basketwork, while they keep
415 water, strong drinks, sugar juice, rice, salt, and so forth in
824 calabashes and godos (2).

2. Both hollowed-out fruit rinds of the Crescentia cagete L. and the Cucurbita lagenaria L., plants from the family of the Cucurbitaceae.

415 Some of them have cedarwood clothes-chests, which must be specially mounted with a great deal of copper; one also sometimes finds liqueur cellars with gilded bottles.

353 For the rest everything is left out in the open in the hut.

264 Often many men come together in one hut for their meals and eat out of one large bowl or calabash. The women withdraw after having placed on very low tables several calabashes or bowls of food for their husbands in the circle in which they are seated, never forgetting to add a large calabash with clean water for washing the hands before and after the meal. The women gather in another hut in order to consume what they kept out for themselves beforehand and what has been left by their husbands.

[888] If an aged person or a highly placed person is in their midst,
[554] he is offered the calabash of food first, so that he may take from it what he wants and eat it by himself from an ordinary plate, although seated in the circle, /10/ while the others partake of their meal from the large bowl. In general they talk with one another during the meal, the highly placed person also taking part in the conversation.

/10 cont./

574 The politeness shown toward a guest springs from the idea that unknowingly one of them might easily take the very piece that the important person wished to have, and although no comment would be made on this, it could nonetheless happen that this would trouble the guest for whom they cherish special respect, 888 or that he would thereby consider himself insulted. It is particularly to old age that they pay great respect.

## Chapter VI

## Household and Agricultural Implements

412 [322] [824] [531] The Bush Negroes mainly use adzes in order to hew their corjalen or canoes out of trees partially burned out beforehand; furthermore, they use planes and chisels in order to work their (usually cedarwood) (1) stools and parels or paddles (2). They are

1. Cedrela odorata L.

2. Hand oar.

especially fond of having these carved with many figures. For them the machete is an indispensable tool that they always carry around and use as a chopping knife, sword, and knife, indeed, even to cut splinters or thorns out of the foot with the tip. They use field axes or hatchets to cut down the bush in order to lay out their small cultivation grounds and to work the wood that they float by rafts and sell.

562 412 [824] [413] The women possess, aside from a machete or knife, also mattocks with which they keep their lands and the place near the dwelling neat; they make brooms from the pina palm racemes or from rice ears bound in sheaves. They like to have scissors, needles, and pins, while for knitting they use a pointed and bent nail.

413 [283] [286] They spin their sewing thread from cotton with a certain tool which they call kéké; they also have a round, wooden tool called sepoe, with which they very nicely and sturdily /11/ make

/15 cont./

585 white cotton sleeping blanket, various colored cloths and pantjes,
[583] some earthenware, such as bowls and plates, iron pots and pans, and the like, while he is obligated on the occasion to provide for an ample supply of strong drink and sugar wine.

They do not have festivities, games, or dancing in connection with their marriages.

586 If a marriage is dissolved, then each of the two parties again goes to his own family; in case those concerned in it and the elders disapprove of this, however, it happens that man and wife are forced to continue to live with each other, especially when there are no substantial reasons and grievances.

593 The man is obligated to provide his wife or his wives with food, clothing, and ornaments; she, to follow the man everywhere, to cook for him, to wash, and to take care of the housekeeping.

264 The wives are neat in an exemplary fashion; plates, bowls,
252 and pans are always kept extremely clean, and they also see to it that everything is extremely clean in connection with cooking.

841 If they find themselves in a period of menstruation, they
302 indicate this immediately to the husband by withdrawing from his dwelling and staying in seclusion with other women; they neither cook nor do the least thing for him in this state, do not even come within sight of him, and remain secluded to the end; when they have cleaned and dressed themselves, they decorate their shoulders and arms with white stripes as a token /16/ that they have again
[386] returned to their normal state. The stripes are made by mixing
[824] pounded adroe (1) with ground chalk and water.

1. A tuberous root-stalk from the Cyperus rotundus L.

Sometimes they also smear the forehead and the neck in this way and appear thus before their husbands.

841 During their seclusion another woman, who is a member of
571 the family or possibly a female friend, daily prepares and brings the
252 food, which, however, is at the expense of the secluded wife. They perform this service for each other mutually.

/17 cont./

765 In these tales, called anansitori (spider-head story), the [538] spider usually plays the main role as a personal being.

The close female relatives wear as a sign of mourning for husband, father, and mother, for a year, white or blue cloths around the head and a white cloth around the body. The men wear a white cloth around head and body only for three months, but during an entire year (since they then may not go completely clothed) they cover themselves with only a black loincloth. They also refrain from wearing ornaments for a whole year.

766 If one of them dies in the working place, in the town, or elsewhere, then the corpse has some hair shorn from its forehead and is subsequently buried without ceremonies. This hair is wrapped in a new piece of linen or cotton and brought to Auca, or their permanent dwelling place, where it then undergoes a proper burial, on which occasion all the customary ceremonies are observed as though the corpse were there.

766 Whenever one of them dies suddenly or from a strange
787 disease, which can arouse a suspicion of poisoning, immediately
[824] after death and before being washed the corpse is placed in a boesipapaja (1) tree (which, split and then tied together, is just

1. It is a hollow tree of very soft and unusable wood which, when split open, resembles bamboo from the inside; the leaves are broad and rasp-like.

like a halved hollow tree) at least five feet long. This kind of coffin is carried from east to west, past all those present, who for this purpose must be ranged in two rows, by two completely strange and impartial men, who are invited from other places for this purpose.

Now the place where the corpse through heavy pressure on the /18/ head forces the two bearers to stand still is where the inquiry begins, and one asks the corpse whether this place where they are now standing still is where clarification can be provided. If one notices a distinct movement of the hollowed-out tree, this is corroboration. If, after the question has been repeated three

/20 cont./

262 milk. She does eat cheese, however, saying that there is absolutely no milk in it.

/21/ Chapter XIII

Diseases, Afflictions, and so forth

164 The greatest affliction among them, too, is the lepra boasi (leprosy and elephantiasis Fuchs), venereal diseases, leg and body 757 pains, and sores. They cure themselves mainly with herbs, which they possess in great quantities and with which they frequently work with special success. They cut open abcesses themselves; in most cases they cup themselves, making the cups from small calabashes. [824] For many pains they rub themselves with spirits steeped in paradise seed (1) and with carapa oil, which they get from the carapa nuts (2).

1. Sem. paradisie Ningre kondre pepre from the Amomum paradise Afsel.

2. Carapa gujanens Obl.

755 In difficult cases and dangerous illnesses, however, they ask for advice from the Cromantie gado, which can only be done by means of song and dance, on which occasion a great deal is drunk. [756] A wentie man (African idol-priest or priestess) qualified for this, or an influential person, is able by means of drink, song, and dance among the others to excite himself to such an extent that in a mad way, without consciousness of what he is doing, he makes superhuman leaps, turnings, and twistings with his body, jumps and dances in the fire, until he finally falls to the ground unconscious and, rolling like a tub, foaming at the mouth, utters the most repulsive and strange sounds, which lasts until he is finally put down somewhere for dead. So long as he remains lying without any movement or sound as if in a deep sleep, one may absolutely not come near him or touch him, but must always take care to keep out of his way in his course and not to hinder him in anything.

/23 cont./

551 The boys born on Sunday Kwassie; the girls Kwassiba.
" " " " Monday Kodjo; " " Adjuba.
" " " " Tuesday Kwamina; " " Abenie.
" " " " Wednesday Kwakoe; " " Akoeba.
" " " " Thursday Jauw; " " Jaba.
" " " " Friday Kofi; " " Afie.
" " " " Saturday Kwami; " " Amba.

538 Their odo or proverbs as a rule have reference to their simple bush life, for instance:

539 "Te pikien boessi kiebrie joe boen, dan joe no moesoe falla biegie boessi te joe toeka naka hen"; that is,

"If you are protected by a small bush, be content with it and do not demand the bigger one that you may happen to see."

Another meaning is:

"If the little suffices, then do not strive for the greater."

"Na srefie avie die de falla pikien bon, de falla bigie wantoe"; that is,

"The ax that cuts down little trees also cuts down big trees."

Another meaning is:

"God, who does not forsake the worm, will not forsake a man either," or:

/24/ "Nobody is so unhappy but that days of good luck come for him"; also:

"Regard your enemy not too lightly."

## Chapter XV

## General Knowledge

• 824 This is on a very low level among them and is confined mainly to a thorough knowledge of varieties of wood and medicinal herbs in use among them.

/27/

534 holds out the longest and is the fastest and most accurate performer
535 of the specific steps for this is cheered as the winner.

Banja or baljaar is one of the true African dances. This name is also given to the African guitar, a musical instrument formerly generally known in the colony, but now totally vanished. This dance is performed to the beat of the two drums and the
[824] kwakwa stool. For this dance the women provide themselves with a saka-saka, a toy having the shape of a great rattle and made from a calabash filled with corals or pits of the Canna indica and Canna lutea, also called viengoe by them. They turn and shake this saka-saka according to the beat of the song taken up by them, which produces a peculiarly strange sound.

## Chapter XIX

## Clothing, Ornaments, Tattooing

291 Their clothing is very simple. The women ordinarily wear merely a piece of colored linen or cotton strip, called bont, two ells long and one and a quarter ells wide. They wrap this around their middle and allow it to hang down below the knee joints, calling it pangi. This undergarment of the Negro women is thus named
301] after pano (Spanish) and pagne (French). As a rule they have the upper body bare, while around the neck, the wrists, and the ankles
302 they wear strings of coral, which greatly take their fancy. They usually plait the head hair into a large number of small braids and bind the ends of these with white cotton threads. Some of them wear their hair combed out, as a result of which their heads,
301 seen from a distance, resemble large mop-heads. They are very fond of blood corals, which are greatly valued among them for ornamentation.

[292] When they celebrate a festival, they also wear a large number of colored cloths of cotton or muslin around the neck, and further adorn themselves with copper and iron rings around the wrists, among which there are strings of coral in the same manner

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[For information on various types of buildings and other physical structures or facilities present in each of the Boni villages, see the village plans on pp. 66, 68, 70, 72, 74, and 76, category 116. Included are data on the occurrence of menstrual huts (munu), kitchens, granaries, and sundry other outbuildings, religious structures (gadu), mortuary sheds, boatbuilding yards, guest houses for visitors, wharfs, fraga tiki (i.e. lineage ancestor cult shrines and objects), and useful trees within the village area which are personally owned.]

/6 cont./

133 Flooding is very variable according to the configuration of the rivers and the nature of the terrain.

133 361 171 At the Creole village of Grigel, situated at the bottom of a glove-finger loop of the Waki River, the June flooding reaches a level of eight meters above the average level in the dry season; the Creole and Indian villages of the Waki are established on hills. On the contrary, along the Lawa whose course is rectilinear, the variation in level is seldom greater than four meters. The maximum water level is 50 centimeters to one meter /above/ the soil of the alluvial terrace. Several of the Creole and Boni villages of the Lawa are even established at the very edge of the great river; the houses are built on piles and their occupants go home by boat during several weeks of the year. Nevertheless, most of the villages and farming habitations are outside the reach of flooding on terraces situated about five meters above the high-water mark, which are found from place to place at the edge of the river and which perhaps mark vestiges of an ancient terrace. This is notably the case with Boniville and Loka villages.

[342] [484]

137 The whole of the territory is entirely covered by equatorial forest: a forest continuous and dense which extends over hundreds of kilometers without a village, without a clearing, without a trail.

The Guiana forest is less high than is ordinarily thought. It is an infinite succession of trees of all dimensions and of extremely varied species, among which true giants are rare; the average height of the cover is around 30 meters, and large trunks are rare.

●824 The variety of species is very great; and the useful ones, few in number and dispersed, are difficult to exploit. The Refugee Blacks, who have a deep knowledge of the forest and its resources, utilize scarcely ten species out of the some 200 which they differentiate, judging the others unusable either because their

/6 cont./

824 wood is too hard to be worked with ordinary instruments or, on the contrary, because it is too soft, too easily attacked by insects, or
311 has a tendency to rot. The zone exploitable by native procedures is limited (for the floodable zones /1/ do not allow fine woods) to the slope of the hills bordering the valley of the watercourses accessible to pirogues; beyond, the cartage of felled trunks becomes impracticable.

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136 A very dense epiphytic vegetation connects the trees with their upper parts; it is there that life blossoms out: flowers, birds, insects, and monkeys.

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[132] Progress through the forest is very arduous. The undergrowth, shrubs, bushes, bound together by fine and elastic lianas, offers a constant obstacle, the machete /sabre/ must be wielded at each
[412] step. The nature of the terrain, a succession of bogs and hills
[133] with steep and slippery slopes, makes walking for heavily loaded men exhausting. On the trail one succeeds with difficulty in making more than 15 to 20 kilometers a day; in the uninhabited forest one can scarcely advance five to six kilometers a day by cutting the strict minimum as one does when hunting. The opening of a route permitting the passage of heavily laden men cannot progress more than three kilometers a day on the average.

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182 The great forest offers few real dangers, but it is an environment profoundly hostile to man, which does not present spontaneously any food resource and allows establishment of villages and cultivated areas only at the price of great efforts.

136 One meets few animals in the interior of the forest, and the resources for hunting are very limited; on the other hand, there are few harmful animals; wild beasts are few and practically do not appear; snakes are much rarer than on the coast and represent
164 only a slight danger. The most real dangers of the forest come from the fall of branches and epiphytes, principally when it is cleared for cultivation; each year there are accidents of this kind in Boni country. Besides, work in the forest is the occasion for many wounds which tend to ulcerate.

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There are no gardens around the cabins because the conditions of the soil and climate render permanent cultivation impracticable. The nearest thing is a few persons planting some banana trees around the hut at the foot of which they spread the hearth ashes. As a general rule villages are closely hemmed in by secondary brushwood, and people plant far from one another and sometimes very far from the village.

If it does not admit the appropriation of land to individuals, custom does admit, on the other hand, the ownership of trees. In the villages the useful trees (coconut trees, maripa palms /attalea excelsa/, mango trees, cashew-apple trees, etc.) all have owners. The tree is considered as personal property and is transmitted by inheritance in the same way as a gun or a canoe. The procedure employed by the Boni for the dispersion of the inheritance among the members of the lineage of the dead man sometimes has the effect of transmitting the ownership of a tree to a person who is not of the village. For example, in Boniville where a fraction of the Kotika lineage lives, two caumou palms were bequeathed a long time ago to members of the lineage living in Kotika, who come each year to gather the fruit.

## Appendix

### Local Chronology Used for Determining Ages

| | |
|---|---|
| 1876 | Death of Grand Man Atyaba. |
| 1877 | Trip of the explorer Crevaux from the Maroni to the Yari and the Amazon, in the company of Apatu, head of the Boni village. |
| 1882 | Apatu secedes, taking with him about 150 persons and founds the village which bears his name on the lower course of the Maroni. |

/160 cont./

764 As soon as the death is announced, the kisimɛ̃ hastily construct a platform called papay (1), while waiting for the

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1. Papay = canon wood /F. canon, from L. canna reed, pipe, tube -- Tr./ (Cecropia Sp.), rapid-growing shrub similar to the African parasol-tree; it is used for the construction of the platform because of the great lightness of its stem.

building of the coffin which will be undertaken the next day.

The wasimɛ̃ bathe the dead man with warm water after transporting him to a special place in the village. A hole is dug for the run-off of this water and closed up again afterward. This place is strictly reserved for this use; people do not go there any other time (at Boniville it is behind hut No. 5).

967 The wasimɛ̃ are two in number, two men and two women; in each lineage there are at least one man and one woman who are acquainted with this work.

975 The wasimɛ̃ remove from the dead man every object (metal, ɔbia, etc.) and dress him in clean clothes. Cotton is put in his nostrils and a chin-strap put on, all of which will be removed at the moment when the coffin is closed (so that the yɔrika of the dead man will not be impeded in its life beyond the grave).

The body placed in the papay is carried under the mortuary shed (krɛyɔsu = house /161/ of tears). A tuft of hair and the fingernails are taken, which are wrapped in a cloth and hung inside the krɛyɔsu.

/161 cont./

1764 The dead person's spouse, his nearest relatives, and his children come and hang their hammocks inside the krɛyɔsu, where they will live until broko dɛ (eighth day after the death).

[533] [535] The village people begin the tukka songs and dance, which will last part of the night, while the friends and near relatives of the dead man lament seated, head covered with a cloth.

[824] The first day after the death, as soon as it is morning, the kisimɛ arrive, and begin to make the coffin, using mahogany boards always kept on hand, thanks to the head of the village.

[613] The women of the dead man's lineage prepare a meal which is offered to the kisimɛ about 1:00 P.M. at the end of their work.

While the coffin is being made, the dead man's friends and distant relatives arrive in crowds from the neighboring villages, bringing tafia and cloth as offerings. Two kisimɛ lay these pieces of cloth one by one on the body saying, "So-and-so buries you."

[787] These pieces of cloth are divided up; about 15 are put into the coffin by the kisimɛ, part of the rest serve as pay for the kisimɛ, part as pay for the dɔmɛ; another part, finally, is used for dressing the widower and his co-wives (or the widow), showing thus that during the whole mourning period they live dependent on the dead person.

Then the kisimɛ close the coffin without any other rites' taking place. The late arrivers who bring more cloths knock the coffin saying, "I bury you," and put them down on the ground.

[892] The work of the kisimɛ is over; they bring the body outside the krɛyɔsu, in front of which has assembled the council called lɛnti kuutu, which constitutes the judicial apparatus of the Boni.

765 /184 cont./
[202] "You who with ɔbia so that the machete will not cut you, so that the broken glass will not wound you, what are you waiting for? You remain seated, are you afraid?"

765 At these words, several of those present stand up and
786 begin to dance, seeking the trance of possession. Some run
787 into the village and come back running, carrying banana-tree stalks. Others drag thorny spathes of awara; two brandish an old, demolished boat.

The drum furiously beats the rhythm of Kumenti. Part
• [824] of the dancers, taken hold of by a furious delirium, jump and prance about. Certain ones take thorny spathes of awara (2)

2. Thorny palm (astrocaryum vulgare) whose sharp thorns nearly 10 centimeters long are particularly formidable. It is impossible to pick up an awara spathe with bare hands without hurting oneself.

under the arm or pass them around the neck.

Part of those present are taken hold of in their turn by trances, including people of mature age and serious character like Fintiman, who is carried off in a faint.

Two possessed people, a man (Ernest, Kotika) and a woman (Awini, Boniville), smeared with pɛmba, are subject to extraordinary contortions. Ernest breaks a bottle over his head with such force that the pieces fly several meters. Both /185/ dance on their knees for an appreciable length of time (but the next day Awini will come to have herself cared for). Those present manifest frenzied joy.

765 About five o'clock the sɔŋɛ dance begins. Three apinti
535 drums are placed at the west wall of the shed. The orchestra
534 is completed by an old overturned boat which seven to eight men strike with sticks.

/193 cont./

792 The Refugee Blacks consider beings and things as distributed on several levels:

--The creator god;
--Lower gods;
--Ancestors;
--Men;
--Animals;
--Plants and inanimate things.

To each of these levels corresponds a level of life and a level of force (kaakiti). A higher force may act on a lower force, but not the reverse.

771 One may say that the cults of the Refugee Blacks have as their goal to capture the vital force of the gods and the ancestors and to bring it back to the level of men, giving them strength, luck, and fecundity. To thus increase one's vital force can be defined as good. Evil (negative magic, witi) is, on the contrary, to capture the vital force of another man in order to increase one's own.

754 The idea that one has wisima is that he uses a higher force (especially an ancestor's yɔrka) which he has succeeded in capturing by magic and in subjecting to his will in order to dominate someone else. Reduced to his own strength alone he could do nothing.

789 824 The magic of the Refugee Blacks might allow one to believe that they think they act directly on men through the medium of plants to which magic virtues are attached. This [792] would be a grave error; in their minds, animals and plants are placed at a lower level absolutely incapable of acting on man by itself. Plants are thought to act only insofar as they appear capable of attracting, of holding like storage cells, the vital force emanated from the gods.

/193 cont./

778 824 A currently widespread idea about animism would lead one to think, for example, that before felling a tree a Refugee Black addresses words and offerings to it. That is entirely absent from his thought: either this tree is likely to serve as support for a god, in which case it can be touched only after complex rites having the aim of transferring the god elsewhere, or it is simply a tree, and one cuts it down without further ado.

784 825 One very clear aspect of these conceptions is the dagu kunu, a curse resulting from the killing of a dog. Any animal may be killed with impunity but not a dog, because "a dog is almost a man."

[613] At the opposite extreme from the true kunu, a curse extending to a whole lineage, the dagu kunu applies only to the guilty person and draws only limited misfortunes upon him.

[772] No feeling whatever with respect to the dog enters into this conception, but only the idea that he is placed on a particular plane, near the plane of the human and his level of force.

796 /194/ The Great Gods

The Boni recognize a supreme God, Nana (1), more

1. This term comes from the Agni.

commonly called Masa Gadu, and Kedi Amu, Kediampon in Kumenti language. He created the lower gods and all that lives on the earth.

793 Here is how the old Boni men relate the myth of the creation of the world:

God created a brother and sister, Adam and Efa. They were twins. He put them in a place where they lived happily without working. But he forbade them to touch the fruit of the custard-apple tree.

/201 cont./

791 787 [794] teacher and who teach a small group of disciples - kineki -, without distinction of villages or lineages and under their sole responsibility; each one, man or woman, is absolutely free to pursue his teaching.

/202/ These teachers are not themselves possessed, but they are believed to know the processes which permit the neophyte to obtain possession with the minimum of risks. They accept the [776] fact, however, that that involves dangers, for one cannot oblige a particular gadu to come into someone, and one may in its place obtain an undesirable gadu.

791 787 776 Procedures vary according to the categories of gadu sought. But they involve three elements which are always found in one form or another:

[798] --They begin by teaching the pupil the language of the divinity, or rudiments at the very least (as we shall point out further on, these languages appear to be in decline); these lessons are private;

[824] --On behalf of a group of pupils, the teacher prepares infusions of certain leaves which are suited to the divinity in question. It is thought that the god likes these plants and that they have the power to attract it.

[788] In certain cults it is required of the pupil to utter at the same time formulas inviting the god to come into him. But this is not general; in the cult of the Papa gadu especially, the teachers bathe the students in the greatest silence.

791 787 824 At the end of the session, the student is often asked to drink a little of the infusion. One might believe that it is a matter of a process having a physical action, certain plants possibly containing hypnotic substances; but except for one aspect of the cult of the Kumenti of which we shall speak later, this does not seem true; especially about the plants believed to attract the Papa gadu, it seems that they have received this role because of their color or odor. Our feeling is that, at least [562] for the Papa gadu cult which appeals more especially to women, suggestion plays an essential part.

/210 cont./

character, touchy and vindictive. In speaking of them one says Papa gadu (papa does not mean "father"; it is a term of respect used for important personages (2) ). They are believed

2. This is the interpretation given by the Refugee Blacks. However, 18th-century documents on the origin of the slaves draw attention to the existence of an African tribe called Papa. Allusions contained in documents of the archives of Surinam, recently studied by Madame Silvia W. de Groot, would tend to identify the Papa with one of the populations of present-day Dahomey. In this hypothesis, the cult of the papa gadu would represent an archaic form of the Dahomey cult of the snake gods.

to have as habitual bearers the boa snakes (dagowe) (3) which

3. This word appears to be the deformation of the Dahomey word dägbe.

are not to be confused with the great water snakes (anaconda) that the Refugee Blacks call mboma sineki. They may also reside in silk-cotton trees (kankan tree) and in the trees called katu udu (Bombax surinamiensis).

The Vɔɔdū which incarnate themselves in humans may be of either sex; if a male god is concerned, it is called "tata vɔɔdū."

/210 cont./

The Bumba gadu other gods of the same nature and equally feared, have as bearers other categories of snakes, principally the great anaconda water snakes.

The Vɔɔdĩ, we have said, are feared; they can exercise on a lineage the collective curse called kunu. But, no more than the Kumẽnti do not represent a principle of good, they do not represent a principe of evil. Not all are so badly disposed toward men, and even if one of them is the enemy of a lineage, it is not for that reason badly disposed toward the rest of men. However this may be, the cult of possession of the Papa gadu is not at all in decline among the Boni. According to the cross-checking we have been able to do, of the 670 persons living on the French bank there are at least 40 to 50 who have a Papa gadu, the great majority of them old women.

/211/ The Voodĩ /sic/ are much feared, and for that very reason much respected. They are oracles which are consulted very often, without consideration of the evil their kunu has done and will still do. A god which exercises the kunu but which is provisionally declared appeased may be consulted without danger; it is always assumed that in any case its bearer, if he respects its commands, has nothing to fear from it.

It is possible that, very unconsciously, women use the fear that the Papa gadu gods inspire in order to maintain their independence and privileged position in Refugee Black society.

Instruction in possession appears to take as a pattern the same principles as that which correspond to the Kumẽnti. It involves the teaching of the Papa language; this language appeared to us to be in decline; in fact, it is used only for formulas of greeting; then the possessed people vaticinate in ordinary language. Instruction in possession also involves daily ablutions with decoctions of leaves; certain of these mixtures are particularly complicated (it is said that they include more than a hundred different kinds of leaves). Instruction is essentially individual; however it also includes dances; on this occasion a

/212 cont./

755 [753] [784] [824] is answering in ordinary language the questions posed. The sick boy's mother asks the god if it is really he who made her son ill. He answers that it is he and gives two reasons: first, a week before, Féni damaged with a blow of the machete the root of a silk-cotton tree in which precisely he himself was living; moreover, his sister Pamasa was sick for 15 days, he did not go to visit her.

The mother begs the god: "Ubegi yu, yu abi leti, gi ɛŋ paadʒ, a 'ɪ be sabi bʊ̄-bʊ̄. (We beg you, you are right (but) pardon him, he had not realized well /what he did/.)"

Then the god directs a treatment: an infusion of a certain number of leaves, with which the sick boy will wash his body. It states that the sick boy will quickly get well.

Pamasa then comes back to her ordinary state. The scene has lasted about three-quarters of an hour in all.

164 Observation in Asisi, October, 1956.

On October 21 at 8 o'clock I am told that Bugi, a woman of about 45, is gravely ill; she suffers from violent pains in the chest and a general tremor. The sick woman is stretched out on the ground, supported by her brother and surrounded by old women who are comforting her. She appears to suffer atrociously, her body is covered with sweat, her lower limbs are agitated with an incessant trembling; she presents the symptoms of a 755 heart attack (2). In front of the house, the ɔbiaman are

2. Bugi had already been hospitalized in Maripasoula for a heart attack.

preparing a "remedy," /213/ for they suspect that this is a question of a manifestation of the Papa gadu of which Bugi is the bearer.

/214 cont./

787 their legs with this white clay; they prophesy in a singing tone, without the usual voice of their bearer's ceasing to be recognizable, expressing themselves in the Saramaka language.

796 The Ampuku have the appearance of men similar to Blacks, but unknown. They reside in the depths of the woods; [84] some are good, others bad. One can gain their good will by worshiping them, which is especially developed in Saramaka country.

796 535 [103] Baliki, of Kormotibo village, tells of having been present one day at a dance of the Ampuku, when he was traveling to the Saramaka village of Balen.

"During the day, people went on the paths far into the bush to put down calabashes containing certain herbs. At night were seen to come out of the forest a large number of unknown men, dressed in the manner of the Saramaka. They danced all night, and at dawn left again as they had come."

796 [789] [824] The Ampuku gods, considered to be maleficent gods of the bush, exercise their influence on everyone. When a person has slept in the bush, he "washes" himself free of Ampuku with an infusion of leaves of five plants which are part of the secondary flora surrounding the villages and of which the principal plant is the sangaafu (Costus cylindricus).

791 787 [619] Frequency of possession. In 1956 teachers or bas were very scarce in Boni country. For the Kumenti gods, only S... (Kotika) remained; for the Papa gadu, since the death of Antinon (Dju), there remained only M... (Papaïston) and B... (Asisi). People were commonly going to receive instruction from Djuka teachers in the villages of the Tapanaoni.

787 562 It would be a great error to believe that nearly all the men have gods. On the contrary, this is an exception. According to the evaluations we were able to make, there is not more than one adult man out of six or seven who is possessed.

/214 cont./

562 787 On the other hand, possession is much more frequent among women: it can be estimated that on the average, one adult woman out of three or four has a gadu.

162 776 787 For example in Boniville, out of 115 persons including about 70 adults, one reckons about 30 gods including 8 to 10 Papa gadu, 8 to 10 Kumẽnti, 1 Bunsunki, and 2 Ampuku.

791 787 56 562 Apprenticeship for possession can begin from adult age, but it seems /215/ that in general it is between 35 and 50 that women take heed of obtaining a gadu. Would that not be, very unconsciously, the desire to stay in the limelight and indirectly to keep a hold over men, once the age of sensual attraction is past?

787 Possession continues for life, and it is out of the question for a god to be transmitted before the death of its bearer. For example, in 1957, the centenarian grandmother in Asisi village, Kuluba, still kept her Papa gadu god. She had not participated any more in the dances of possession for long years, but her gita was always consulted.

But it can happen, if a possessed person stops taking part in dances and practicing the rites that have been shown him, that any manifestation ceases at the end of a few years.

We observed that in B... of the Dipélu II lo, in 1948 and 1949. He used to exhibit strong attacks of the gita of Kumẽnti. He stopped his instruction, finding that it was costing too much and was taking time. In 1952 he exhibited only latent manifestations of his gita at rare intervals. In 1956 nothing was any longer observable.

787 789 It can happen, on the other hand, that attacks of possession become so frequent and so strong that the person concerned risks losing his reason; if it concerns a god which did not come of its own initiative, one can try to expel it. In [824] order to "wash" someone free of a gita, he is made to pass between two rows of Obiaman who hold dry palms, pina tõngo, in their hands and utter adjurations.

/215 cont./

787 789 [114] in their hands and utter adjurations. We saw this rite performed in 1949 but without being able to observe the exact details.

787 791 The frequency of the phenomena of possession and the importance accorded to them imprint a remarkable character on the religious life of the Refugee Blacks: all these manifestations have for each one the character of obvious material fact. How, then, doubt that one lives with the gods, sees them, and [177] speaks to them? Because of this fact the society of the Refugee Blacks is utterly impermeable to European influences.

787 824 Some plants utilized in the rites of possession. The preparations with which the possessed people "wash" their bodies consist of macerations of leaves. The plants used, which for the most part belong to the secondary flora which develops in the old clearings, are very numerous. However, some are regarded as [789] having a very unique power. The first five especially are utilized by all the Boni to "wash off the Ampuku" when they have slept a night in the bush.

| Aluku Name | Identification(1) | Use |
|---|---|---|
| [122] | 1. Identification by Mr. Hoock, botanist connected with the Institut français d'Amérique tropicale (IFAT) in Cayenne. | |
| Lebi katu | cotton | cult of the Ampuku |
| Kɔnɔpo wiwi | Ayptis atrorubens (Labiaceae) | ---- /216/ |
| Foo kãkã | Tiaridium indicum (Borraginaceae) | ---- |
| Sume wiwi | Ocimium sanctum (?) (Labiaceae) | ---- |

787 /216 cont./
824

| Aluku Name | Identification | Use |
|---|---|---|
| Sãŋgaafu | Costus cylindricus (zingiberaceae) | cult of the Papa gadu and of the Ampuku |
| Malimbelimbe | Piper sp. (?) | ---- |
| Filli (Hɔligɔɔ) | Chamaesyae sp. (?) (euphorbiaceae) | ---- |

828 Beliefs Concerning the Human Person and Its Development
Ancestor Worship

[171] The Refugee Blacks of the various tribes have precise and identical conceptions on this subject, which are found also, more or less mixed with Christian conceptions, among the West Indian populations of African origin. For them, man is formed of three elements: the body, the yɔka which may be translated by personality, and a higher principle called akka.

[184] It goes without saying that among the Boni, who have not elaborated these conceptions and received them from the Djuka, nobody is capable of discoursing on them. But numerous conceptions having to do with magic and to the relationships with the ancestors permit of rather reliable cross-checking.

[128]

774 The akka. It is not possible to translate akka (1) by soul in the

1. This word appears to be a deformation of kla (Agni-Baoulé), word to which a very comparable meaning is attached.

sense we understand it. The akka is an immortal divine element

/236 cont./

[787] very serious question, the asker contents himself with going to interrogate a divinity in which he has confidence. If, when put to the test, the advice turns out to be bad, he goes to consult others and if he obtains the same advice from two different directions, he stops there. If not, he appeals to the elders of [888] his village to bring into play the processes of divination which [791] they alone know.

[428] A second category of divinatory procedures consists in the use of "remedies," whose origin is unknown and which are transmitted like a personal belonging.

The process reputed to be the surest, in which everybody [824] has confidence, is called pusu. The instrument is composed simply of a rope made of fibers of the Mauritia (2) palm tree

[439]

2. Palm tree which grows in the coastal savannas and whose fibers are bought from the Galibi Indians. The word pusu, like gita, kandu, mula, is of Congolese origin. In Kikongo, mpuusu = raffia palm tree.

which has been dipped in an infusion of herbs; it is stretched horizontally between two stakes. The elder brings near it a machete blade heated red-hot, at the same time asking the question. If the answer is positive, the rope is cut when the iron has scarcely touched it. If the answer is no, they state that the red-hot iron remains in contact with the rope for an appreciable length of time without the rope's being cut.

They will say for example: ɛfu na Ampuku siki X, a how a 'ɛ mu do: fosi a kɔti: If it is an Ampuku which is making X sick, the machete must cut (the rope) before (even) reaching it.

/251 cont./

751 789 Renewal of the power of the ɔbia. The Refugee Blacks have the idea that no magic power can last if it is not renewed by formulas and offerings appealing to the god from which it came. [824] Each year, at variable dates for each ɔbia, one must renew the power of the ɔbia by dipping the support object into a maceration of certain leaves. This renewal may not take place on January 1. On that day all leaves lose their power. /252/

[768] Mr. W. F. van Lier writes that among the Djuka, objects (bracelets, etc.) serving as support for a magic remedy are thrown away upon the death of the owner for they have lost [184] [428] all power. The Boni do not have this conception; with them, these objects keep their value for the dead person's son provided that before dying he voluntarily transmitted them to him by giving him mula.

789 428 613 Transmission of ɔbia. An ɔbia is often bequeathed simultaneously to a son and to a nephew. Care is taken not to lose the ɔbia for the lineage. Thus it is that certain lineages have certain ɔbia as their specialty.

789 [171] Kãndu. The Refugee Blacks call kãndu a magic object intended to protect property (houses, harvests) against theft. This procedure is also very much used by the Creoles.

There are three common kinds of kãndu:

--Piiti tiki kãndu. It is made of a split stick stuck into the ground, in the slit of which dry banana leaves or small sticks are placed horizontally. This device originated in Dahomey.

--Sikopu kãndu. It involves a shovel stuck into the ground in front of the house (the idea of the shovel is associated with the idea of death, for this instrument is used particularly in digging graves).

--Bɔɔ kãndu, made up of a bow and arrow planted in the ground.

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751 Tyifunga (1). This is the name of the magic enclosures made
417
[824]

1. They also use the word azāg, borrowed from the Fon of Dahomey.

of shoots /"tongues"/ of pinot palm, pina tōngo, attached to a string, with which on certain occasions a village is completely surrounded. These enclosures are thought to bar the passage of the evil spirits of the bush (taku sani); they are put up especially in the case of an epidemic, as well as before the great festivals which attract a crowd of persons among whom wisimā can slip
789 in. After putting the enclosure in place, people arrange themselves in a line at one end of the village and move along slowly so as to sweep its whole surface, firing guns, making all the noise possible by striking metallic objects and striking the ground with reeds to expel the evil spirits. This is what is called naki tyifunga. The elders repeat the formula: "U naki tyifunga fu egi na: mu ku a so (We strike tyifunga so that the evil (spirits) may not be able to come to earth)."

751 417 The magic fence is then left in place until it is rotten.

753 76 Beliefs about leprosy. Lepers are buried at the limits of the cemetery, but they are not considered cursed, and mourning for them is carried out normally.

753 784 /254/ They take for granted that if someone is attacked by leprosy, it is because he has "broken" his bwasi kina. They think that an enemy can, because of ill will, hide a bit of the forbidden fare in the food. This is why the Boni do not willingly tell one another their interdictions.

/261 cont./

241 neglecting these rites. Their rigorous observance has the effect of preventing farming from becoming for them a commercial activity and of keeping a religious and family feeling in it.

824 778 784 [776] --The kākāti (silk-cotton tree) is a much feared tree, for according to the elders each one of them shelters 12 categories of divinities, especially a Papa gadu and an Ampuku. So it is absolutely impossible to cut it. One must even be very careful not to injure its roots which spread far. The site of every one felled is preserved. Likewise people watch carefully so as not to injure the roots of the big silk-cotton trees often found in the villages.

824 778 776 361 Still, the fact that their site was chosen for setting up a village shows that people believe they can make an alliance with the divinities which reside in a silk-cotton tree and draw their protection upon themselves.

824 778 789 [776] --The katu tree (Bombax Surinamiensis), tree of very large size, living in symbiosis with a parasitic liana which appears to enclose it in a gigantic net, also shelters maleficent divinities (Ampuku, Papa gadu, Bumba gadu). One may cut it down after performing rites whose purpose is to transfer these divinities into another tree.

First, one must have procured from a man who possesses this remedy a pot of ɔbia containing an infusion of leaves in the middle of which is a bracelet of fibers. /262/ It costs [435] two liters of tafia, four liters of beverage (beer for example), one large piece of cloth, and one machete.

Having arrived at the foot of the tree, one bathes his body and machete with this infusion; one puts the fiber bracelet on one's arm. One also bathes several small sticks provided [822] with squares of white cloth (for the Papa gadu), dark blue and red (for the Ampuku), and a pinot palm (pina tɔngo) leaf.

One plants the sticks at the foot of the tree, one strikes the trunk with the palm leaf while invoking the divinities of

/262 cont./

824 778 789 the tree: "Ala sani di dɛ na a udu ya, da mu kumɔto, beka mi ɔ faa ɛŋ. Kɔm na a pina tɔŋgo: All things (suprahuman entities) who are in this tree, leave it, for I am going to throw it to the ground; come into this palm leaf." One takes away the palm leaf and the little flags far from there into the interior of the lands, to a spot where nobody is likely to come to fell trees, and one arranges them beside some big tree. The divinities will come and settle there. Nevertheless, it is still necessary to wait almost a month to cut the katu tree, probably to leave the maleficent influences time to dissipate.

824 778 [781] [1171] The Boni are so afraid of this tree that many of them, deeming these precautions insufficient, give up the idea of cutting it down and go to establish their clearings elsewhere. The Creole gold miners of the Haut Maroni, who call it cottonwood, also attribute a maleficent influence to it and some of them do not cut it.

The Refugee Blacks fear also, but to a lesser degree, what they call kɔtkɔti, that is, the small trees of any species which, instead of having grown straight, have two angles [1176] [1784] in their trunk like a Z. This is a very rare anomaly. In such a shrub is hidden a maleficent entity, taku sani, capable, if a man cut the trunk unintentionally, to take revenge on him by paralyzing a limb or even the whole body in a bent position. In order to see whether or not the entity is present in the shrub, there exists, according to the Boni, a very simple means: one gently brings the finger near the bent part. If he feels his finger held there to the point where he has trouble drawing it back, the genie is present! The power of autosuggestion characteristic of the Refugee Blacks shows itself clearly here.

[1789] Rites exist for rendering the kɔtkɔti harmless, for cutting them with impunity, and even for using them in magic preparations, but we do not know the details. Kɔtkɔti are among the objects usually found in the chapels (ɔbia ɔsu) of Kumẽnti; we have even happened to see one used to fasten a

/262 cont./
824 door; it was a particularly feared kɛ̃ndu that no thief would
778 have dared to remove.

825 --The Kɛ̃ntamasu are the divinities, especially maleficent
778 and hostile to men, who live in the termitaries (these are
[776] termites proper, who make their nest in the earth, and not wood lice, much more common). There is one to each termitary.

[789] After a meticulous examination of the soil of the clearing, one marks all the termitaries /263/ and sprinkles each of them with a preparation containing leaves, pink clay kukusa, and manioc juice. One adjures the genie to go away, no matter where.

It happens that in spite of all the precautions taken a
[789] termitary is forgotten. Then, several days later, one will
[784] have the consternation of seeing the Kɛ̃ntamasu reveal itself in someone of the lineage; it announces that it is going to
[782] exercise its kunu (curse). It is temporarily appeased by offerings of tafia, various drinks, red cloth.

796 The Kɛ̃ntamasu call themselves the Akɔlo. Through
198 the mouth of their bearers they speak a language nobody under-
789 stands. However, when they wish to be understood by those present they speak Kumɛnti.

755 Observation in Boniville, January, 1957:
784 A..., boatman of the border-fixing mission, asks for three days off. His wife, Masauman, has been ill for several days; divination (in this particular case the gita of a female relative in his lineage) showed that it was the doing of a Kɛ̃ntamasu injured in the burning of the clearing which he himself, A..., cut for his wife in October. The Kɛ̃ntamasu has not yet manifested itself directly, but a kunu threatens; to appease it he must put in action the remedy known only
000 to M..., an old man of Asisi. He will go to the spot, following

/271 cont./
*539 rice-straw broom (2). If you rub me with it, I lose my
[264]
• [824]

2. The Refugee Blacks have the practice of using lemon juice for scouring dishes.

power."

He said: "That's good; please agree to come into my ɔbia house, so that I may frustrate my wife Wénon and my children. They tire me." It said: "Very well, I shall go with you." He walked, he put it on his head. His belly was full, comrades, his intestines were full. He walked until he arrived at the outskirts of the village. He shouted: "All the people of the village, shut yourselves up, I am carrying my ɔbia to my ɔbia house." They said: "What art thou saying?" He repeated: "I am carrying my ɔbia pot to my ɔbia house." Gban! Gban! The people slammed the doors of their houses. gban!

Ananɛi walked to his ɔbia house, opened the door, he hung up the frying-pan in a corner.

That day he did not eat in Wénon's house. Wénon cooked spinach for him. He said: "My belly is full." He waited until midnight, then he went out. He said to the frying-pan: "Frying-pan, why are you beautiful thus?" It said: "I am beautiful, but I am not beautiful for nothing." He said: "Show me so that I may see."

It began to fry for him as much food as he could eat. /27./
/272/ One of his children named Akpwatitikwati said (to his brother) Asingébélé: "We are cleverer than Ananɛi. I am going to keep an eye on my father until I surprise him." Then he began to watch him and surprised him. He saw and cried: "So that's how he did it."

Ananɛi said he was going hunting; then he went away to hunt. (Immediately) the children came; they said: "Frying-pan... " ... (same formulas).

/273 cont./

mother." Comrades, they suffered from pian (1)! All together

1. Skin disease from which most Refugee Black children used to suffer.

they entered the Obia house. Again: "Whips, why are you so handsome?"

(same formula)

Viop! viop! Anansi ran, he shut the door; he said: "Let me see, whips, strike so that I may see!" viop! viop!

(Somebody in the audience) "Wénon was inside?" -- "Wénon was inside!" (laughs). The whips hit them until their skin was bloody, their pian pimples cut, so that the blood flowed over them.

(cruel laughs from the audience)

Then Anansi opened the door and they fled.

The end.

4) Anansi and the Bat

Anansi was looking for someone to go with him to a festival which was taking place in a neighboring village... because the more who come, the more they give you to eat. He asked the bat, who said to him: "I haven't been to a festival for a long time. I'll go on the day you wish." The day they had set arrived. They started out; they walked until they had arrived near the village. Anansi said: "Comrade bat, see this lebi weko (?). If I begin to shout: "My belly.

2. Lebi weko: bougouni (Inga alba) tree whose bark is used in the native pharmacopoeia.

/278 cont./

#539 so that the people will see you." She answered: "It is I who will drag you as far as the bush." They discussed it to the insult stage, and wagered. They agreed to set Sunday as the test time; she should pull the end of a rope going out from the village. She said: "Very well." -- "I am proud of my ancestors, Bush-Mama. You will not drag me into the bush, I am the one who will drag you inside the village."

Then he came back to the village and went to the river. He rushed into the water, dyou! he went up to the Water-Mama. He said to her: "Will you have a tug-of-war against me? The Water-Mama answered: "It is I who will drag you into the river." Anansi said: "I am sure to drag you up on land so that the people will see how you look." Again they wagered and set Sunday as the test day. He said: "Very well, on the day set I shall come into the water to hold out the end of a rope to you." The Water-Mama said: "Very well. I shall stay there to take the end of the rope." We shall see who is a man and who is not."

He went back to his village. Saturday afternoon he set up a tyifunga (2) enclosure around the village, as far as the river

[151] [325] [419] [983]

2. Magic enclosure made of pinot palm leaves strung on a cord, to which is attributed the power to stop bad influences. After putting up the enclosure they purify the village by cleaning it completely.

and as far as the bush behind the village. He cleaned the village completely. He cut a long and strong rope, he went to slip one end of it into the river, he went to put the other in the bush.

On Sunday the Bush-Mama and the Water-Mama came and each pulled on an end of the rope. Anansi himself was not